



# AMERICAN SIKH COUNCIL

## VOICE OF SIKHS IN AMERICA

(Formerly, World Sikh Council – America Region)

[WWW.AMERICANSIKHCOUNCIL.ORG](http://WWW.AMERICANSIKHCOUNCIL.ORG)

888-340-1702 | [contact@AmericanSikhCouncil.org](mailto:contact@AmericanSikhCouncil.org)

### MEMBER GURDWARAS:

1. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Opelika, AL
2. Sikh Temple of Alabama, Bessemer, AL
3. Gurdwara Singh Sabha of Delano, CA
4. Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Livingston, CA
5. Gurdwara Sahib Fremont, CA
6. Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society, Stockton CA
7. Sikh Gurdwara Riverside, Riverside, CA
8. Sikh Gurdwara of LA, North Hollywood, CA
9. Sikh Gurdwara Sahib, San Jose, CA
10. Gurdwara Guru Angad Darbar, Bakersfield, CA
11. Colorado Singh Sabha, Denver, CO
12. Connecticut Sikh Assoc, Southington, CT
13. Guru Tegh Bahadur Foundation, Norwalk, CT
14. Sikh Society of Florida Southwest Ranches, FL
15. Sikh Society of Central Florida Inc., Oviedo, FL
16. Guru Nanak Darbar Religious Society Augusta GA
17. Guru Singh Sabha of Augusta, Augusta, GA
18. Sikh Study Circle of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
19. Sikh Religious Society of Chicago, Palatine, IL
20. Sikh Society of South, New Orleans, LA
21. New England Sikh Study Circle, Boston, MA
22. Singh Sabha of Michigan, Canton, MI
23. Sikh Gurdwara of Michigan Rochester Hills MI
24. Sikh Society of Michigan, Madison Heights, MI
25. Downriver Gurdwara Sahib, Brownstown, MI
26. Sikh Study Circle of St. Louis, St. Peters, MO
27. Guru Nanak Foundation of Jackson, MS
28. Sikh Heritage Society of Greater Charlotte, Charlotte, NC
29. Sikh Gurdwara of North Carolina, Durham, NC
30. Sikh Sabha of Upper Valley, Hanover, NH
31. Garden State Sikh Assoc, Bridgewater, NJ
32. Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Delaware Valley, Sewell, NJ
33. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Glenrock, NJ
34. Sikh Sabha of New Jersey, Lawrenceville, NJ
35. Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh, Las Vegas, NV
36. Sikh Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
37. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
38. Sikh Foundation of Syracuse, Liverpool, NY
39. Sikh Society of Rochester, Rochester, NY
40. Guru Nanak Foundation of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
41. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
42. Guru Nanak Rel. Soc. of Central Ohio Columbus, OH
43. Sikh Heritage Society of Mahoning Valley, Canfield, OH
44. Sikh Sadh Sangat, Easton, PA
45. Philadelphia Sikh Society, Millbourne, PA
46. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
47. Singh Sabha of South Carolina, Lexington, SC
48. Mid-South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
49. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
50. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
51. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
52. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
53. Guru Nanak Foundation of Tidewater Chesapeake VA
54. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
55. Sikh Religious Society of Wisconsin Brookfield WI

### OTHER INSTITUTIONS:

1. Siri Guru Granth Sahib Found., Anaheim, CA
2. Sikh Speakers Network Inc., Atlanta, GA
3. Sikhs Serving America, Topeka, KS
4. Sikh Heritage Foundation, Long Island, NY
5. Sikh Youth Federation of North America, White Plains, NY
6. Sikh Educational & Religious Foundation, Dublin, OH
7. Sikh Youth Federation of USA, Toledo, OH
8. Academy of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, TX

October 7, 2015

Mr. Tom Torlakson  
State Superintendent  
State Board of Education  
1430 N Street, Room 5602  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Torlakson,

The American Sikh Council (ASC) formerly known as World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) is a national umbrella organization consisting of over 63 gurdwaras and Sikh institutions. The ASC board/council is nominated by the gurdwaras/institutions to represent their interest accurately at the national and international level, particularly about our Faith and heritage.

On behalf of the American Sikh Council, I want to thank your colleagues and you for really taking the time to consider input from everyone, including the Sikh-Americans so patiently in order to update and improve the school curriculum in the state of California.

Based on the most recent updated revisions reviewed by us which reference Sikh-Americans; (please see below) we appreciate and accept the well thought changes to portray our heritage and contribution to America.

Note: At the end of each section ASC's comments which are in bold letters:

*Chapter 3: Grade Two - People Who Make a Difference*  
*Ref: Attachment 1B; ... LNS, 46-48;*

*Students are encouraged to compare and contrast their daily lives with those of families who have lived in the past. To deepen student understanding and engagement, students can read 'When I was Little' by Toyomi Igus, 'Dear Juno' by Soyung Pak and 'The Boy with Long Hair' by Pushpinder (Kaur) Singh.*

**Oct 2015 ASC Rec: ... OK with American Sikh Council.**

*Chapter 3: Grade Four—California: A Changing State*  
*Ref: Attachment 1B; ... LNS, 32 - 37;*

*the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, South Asians (predominantly Sikhs), and other immigrants of the second half of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, who provided a new supply of labor for*

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American Sikh Council is a representative body of Sikh Institutions of America. It is the representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras (Sikh places of prayer) and institutions that meet its criteria for membership. ASC works to promote Sikh interests at the national and international level focusing on issues of advocacy, education, and well-being of humankind.





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*California's railroads, agriculture, and industry and contributed as entrepreneurs and innovators, especially in agriculture;*

**Oct 2015 ASC Rec: ... OK with American Sikh Council**

Ref: Attachment 1B, Lns: 614 - 620

P.114, l. 614-620.

*They learn about the contributions of immigrants to California from across the country and globe, such as Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh immigrant, who in 1957 became the first Asian American to serve in the United States Congress, Civil Rights activists Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, Tech titans Sergey Brin (Google), and Jerry Yang (Yahoo), and Harvey Milk, a New Yorker who was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977 as California's first openly gay public official.*

**Oct 2015; ASC Recommendation;**

*Following the statement 'Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh immigrant' the words; 'from the Punjab region of South Asia' be added to honor and recognize the ethnicity of Dr. Saund.*

*(Please keep in mind that 'Punjab region of south Asia' that means a land of five rivers is a geographical area. Which, at present stands politically divided between India and Pakistan. Therefore, any addition of suffixes like the words India or Pakistan should be avoided to identify this region.) With the suggested addition the statement will read as follows;*

**Suggested Version: ... They learn about the contributions of immigrants to California from across the country and globe, such as Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh immigrant from the Punjab region of South Asia who in 1957 became the first Asian American to serve in the United States Congress.**

Ref: Attachment 1C ... Lns; 1543 - 1556

*P 306, l. 1543-1556. A new world religion, Sikhism, was founded in 1469 in South Asia. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, a social reformer who challenged the authority of the Brahmins and the Hindu caste order. Students learn about the Sikh Scripture (Guru Granth Sahib), articles of faith, the turban, and Sikh history. Guru Nanak taught that all human beings are equal and can realize the divine within them without any human intermediaries or priests. Sikhs believe that each individual can realize the divine on his or her own through devotion to God, truthful living, and service to humanity. The three basic principles of Sikhism are honest living, sharing with the needy, and praying to one God. With the addition of Sikhism, there were now three major religions in India. While relations between people of different religions were often peaceful, some Mughal rulers, who were Muslims, persecuted Sikhs. Other Mughal rulers, most notably Akbar, encouraged and accelerated the blending of Hindu and Islamic beliefs as well as architectural and artistic forms.*

**Oct 2015 ASC Rec: ... OK with American Sikh Council. . The total paragraph, be kept intact as it is, without any alteration.**

Ref: Attachment 1C ... Lns: 962- 987

*Populists as examples of how farmers attempted to organize in the face of larger pressures. California also came to play an increasingly significant role in the national economy. The Gold Rush in California, the building of the transcontinental railroad, and agricultural labor in Hawaii and the mainland spurred Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, and Sikh immigration to the United States. Agricultural production and the growth of*

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*the oil industry accounted for much of California's early economic growth. Asian farmers and laborers contributed to the development of irrigation systems and farming throughout the state. Families from Mexico increasingly provided the labor force for the cultivation of this region. Students study the social, economic, and political handicaps encountered both by immigrants and American citizens of Mexican ancestry. Eventually the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) and the Immigration Act of 1917 greatly limited Asian entry to the United States. California built the immigration station at Angel Island to implement restrictions on Asian admissions. Despite the government's eventual tightening of restrictions on immigration in the second decade of the twentieth century, immigrants played an essential role in developing the country as both an agricultural and industrial giant.*

**Oct 2015 ASC Rec: ... OK with American Sikh Council. The word 'Sikh', be kept intact as it is, without any alteration.**

Attachment 1D, ... Lns: 456 - 467

*Classical texts such as The Odyssey, the Bhagavad Gita, the Aeneid by Vergil, Antigone by Sophocles, the Analects by Confucius, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Ramayana, Greek myths, and the Bible are all good starting points. From the Middle Ages through the early modern era, Urdu poetry, Chaucer and Shakespeare's texts, Islamic architecture like Alhambra or Cambodia's Angkor Wat, West African iron regalia, and monuments*

**Oct 2015 ASC Rec: ... OK with American Sikh Council. The words 'Sri Guru Granth Sahib', be kept intact as it is, without any alteration.**

Once again on behalf of the American Sikh Council I want to thank you and the board for the tremendous effort put forth to get such a large spectrum of material sorted out for accuracy so that our children really learn and get educated for a brighter future.

Respectfully,

Kirpal Singh

Chair – CA Textbook Task Force

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